

QUALITY IS YOUR NUMBER ONE SELLER

Brand Names Guide Yard Goods Buyer

The process of quality control is scientific, statistical and mechanical. All this takes second place to the customer's satisfaction with the finished product. To a customer quality control is the assurance that the product received will not vary from what is expected by more than a specified amount.

For the last two years the Kresge Company has stressed quality merchandise to the public and the employee force. In the Kresge yard goods and dry goods department Buyer Victor W. Hoerath insures the quality of his merchandise by buying from companies and suppliers who will stand behind their products and also in whom the public have the most confidence.

He said, "Our greatest appeal is to try to give the customer something good for less money. Yet, I would rather pay more money in order for the articles to maintain a higher standard of quality than accept something inferior." Mr. Hoerath and Associate Buyer Raymond G. Werschky said brand names and nationally advertised products are two important things to remember when purchasing quality goods.

Kresge's brand name suppliers include Dan River Mills, Inc.; Louis Hand, Inc.; Cannon Mills, Inc.; Beacon Manufacturing Company; Peparell Manufacturing Company; Ely & Walker; Homestead Draperies, Inc.; and Hygiene Shower Curtain Manufacturing Co., Inc.

All these companies are well known leaders in their fields and are advertised in national publications. Each assures Kresge's buyer of a thorough quality control check, either within its own plant or by an outside testing concern.

Cannon Surpasses Home Use

The "largest manufacturer of household textiles," Cannon Mills, Inc., supplies Kresge with dry goods. Only the highest grade of cotton is used and when received each 500 pound bale is carefully examined by expert technicians and classified. Using the fastest dyes available helped Cannon to earn the Seal of Approval of the American Institute of Laundering for its dyeing of colored sheets. All fabrics are tested between the weaving and bleaching process and again before they are packed for shipment. Cannon Mills is proud of the painstaking attention it pays to the intricate details of finish, hemming and workmanship. A Cannon representative said, "You'd be amazed at

the rigid tests given Cannon towels and sheets. They're far more severe than any that towels or sheets might receive in a home."

Beacon Manufacturing Company, one of the largest manufacturers of blankets, is recommended in *Good Housekeeping* magazine. It is nationally known but does little national advertising. Before manufacture the fabrics go through rigorous tests to determine the wearing qualities and washability. All blankets are checked for imperfections in material and packaging imperfections before leaving the mills.

Hand Uses Many Test Sources

Louis Hand, Inc., supplier of Kresge curtains, buys piece goods from outside sources. These groups do the actual testing. Any newly considered fabric is submitted to an independent laboratory for extensive testing. All cloths must pass requirements set by the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists. These tests most nearly approximate the conditions of normal home usage. Within the Louis Hand plants curtains must pass inspection points within each department and other production stages before being shipped. The company does not advertise in its own name but many of the cloths used have national recognition. It is a large user of Fiberglas and of the well known "drip dry" fabrics produced by such mills as Seneca Textile Corporation and Spring Mills.

Ely & Walker Run Own Tests

A primary Kresge supplier, Ely & Walker, has fabrics that undergo rigid inspections for tensile strength, uniformity of dye lot, shrinkage and color fastness at its own plants. One of the company's machine washable corduroys, which carries the *Good Housekeeping* Seal of Approval, is subjected to regular



Carefully examining the quality of one of their expected best sellers are, left to right: Victor W. Hoerath, yard goods and dry goods buyer; Raymond G. Werschky, associate buyer; and H. K. Jacobson, assistant to the buyer. Mr. Hoerath uses the "Flash-O-Lens" to count the number of threads per square inch in the material.

inspection to discern holes caused by the "cutting knives." These cutting knives are knives that cut open the cloth loops to form the "rib" in corduroy material. Ely & Walker also runs tests to determine the quality of weight, count, yarn size and coloring.

Hygiene Depends on Suppliers

The finest grade of vinyl obtainable is used in the shower curtains produced by Hygiene Shower Curtain Manufacturing Co., Inc. The vinyl is specially formulated for the company by Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. Goodyear's quality control department tests the product for conformance to government standards and specifications. The company also follows government standards and those of the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists. Every piece of fabric is tested for weaving defects before manufacture and at every step along the way by experienced and competent technicians. Those pieces not passing high on the rigid point system are not allowed to continue through the process. The finished products are tested for shrinkage, color fastness, fire resistance (required by law), tear strength, abrasion, chlorine retention, seam strength and material finish. Each week 100,000 yards of goods are taken from cartons already packed for shipment and spot checked. If they don't test satisfactorily the entire amount is returned and rechecked.

Dan River's decision to insure quality through modern machinery is reflected in its new mercerizing machine and modern comber. The comber removes the short fibers from the cotton, because the longer fibers are stronger and more spinable. The new 100-inch-wide mer-

cerizer increases the fiber's power to absorb dyes so clearer colors result. It also gives cotton fabrics greater strength. The chemists in Dan River research laboratories work continuously to perfect present products and develop new ones. Two of the new processes invented are Wrinkl-Shed, a process to make cottons wrinkle resistant, and Dri-Don, a wash-and-wear process.

D. O. Staff Checks Quality

Though quality control is mainly the responsibility of the manufacturer and the supplier, Mr. Hoerath and Mr. Werschky must be aware of all the processes. They look for the best article at the best price that will most please the customer, always keeping past likes and dislikes in mind. They must be able to point out any irregularities to the salesmen.

In his office Mr. Hoerath uses a "Flash-O-Lens" to check fabrics. This small apparatus magnifies the material and allows him to count the number of threads per square inch in the material. An "80 square" percale has 80 threads to the square inch and is a good grade of percale. He said, "After you have looked through the 'Flash-O-Lens' a number of times you can tell whether the fabric has a large number of threads in it without counting." In addition to counting threads he always checks stitching, evenness, size and weight of materials.

Buyer Uses Home Testing

Mr. Hoerath and Mr. Werschky also use a practical test. They give their office staff samples of curtains and tablecloths to wash at home. After the goods are returned they examine them to see if the fabrics have retained color, tightness of weave and body finish. Mr. Hoerath commented, "I must insist that the merchandise will stand wear, service and live up to expectations. After it appears in the stores I also check to see that it is the same quality and grade I ordered and it is being received well by the public."

The two men like to buy from companies that back up their products. They said the bigger companies correct mistakes faster and also police their own operations. Another thing that aids them in choosing articles is a brand name.

Buyer Hoerath advanced his formula for his department's part in helping to make the quality stress at Kresge a large success: price signs stating "first quality" merchandise, brand names and national advertisements, easy accessibility and display of the product and sale personnel's belief in the product.

He summed up his role as buyer saying, "We are convinced quality is what Mrs. Housewife wants. Price is not the main thing. She will not sacrifice quality for price. We are eager to help her in her goal."



The tear strength of Dan River fabrics is tested by using special machines in the Control Laboratory. To be rated top quality the sample must not tear when exposed to normal wear. This is one of the many inspections and tests that Dan River administers in order to assure the Kresge purchaser the very best.



Chemists in the Research Laboratory constantly work to prepare newer and more serviceable Dan River fabrics while improving upon present materials. All tests are run to conform to government and company standards.